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## ***The Mongolia Monitor***

**News from USAID Mongolia**

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### **Mission News:**

The latter half of May was particularly busy. A two person team, Steve Ramonas and Virgilio Cruz, from USAID Manila's Regional Inspector General Office, arrived to conduct a three week performance audit of the Mission's Economic Policy Reform & Competitiveness Project. The head of USAID Manila's Regional Financial Services Center also arrived to help the Mission launch the preparation of its annual Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act Report.

USAID's Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for Asia, Mark Ward, traveled to Mongolia to attend the 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Microfinance Institutions, held May 29-31. As an invited speaker Mr. Ward gave a presentation at the closing plenary session entitled "Recent Lessons Learned and Future Challenges in Microfinance." Afterwards, Mr. Ward met with U.S. Ambassador Mark C. Minton, U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Brian Goldbeck, and Millennium Challenge Corporation Country Director Robert Reid and Deputy Director Burak Inanc.

Mr. Ward also met with staff of the USAID Representative Office, and grantee resident representatives and contractor chiefs of party and their staffs, where he was briefed on the status of ongoing USAID Mongolia projects in economic policy reform and competitiveness, micro-enterprise and microfinance, anti-corruption, and judicial reform. In addition, he met with selected project beneficiaries as well as GOM counterparts including the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Chief Judge for Zuunmod Aimag.

On May 26-27 the aimags of Khentii, Sukhbaatar, Dornod, Govisumber and Tuv were struck by a sudden onslaught of severe weather (extreme cold and wind) in which 55 persons (including 15 children) and an quarter million livestock died from exposure. A large number of temporary and permanent residences were either damaged or destroyed. Preparations are underway to activate the U.S. Ambassador's Emergency Fund to provide emergency relief to those affected in the first week of June.

## **Program News:**

# **PROGRAM AREA: PRIVATE SECTOR-LED ECONOMIC GROWTH**

## **Economic Policy Reform and Competitiveness Project (EPRC)**

***Chemonics***

[www.eprc-chemonics.biz](http://www.eprc-chemonics.biz)

### **Economic Policy Support**

*Impact of tax reform:* The EPRC Project continues to clean up the latest batch of data on VAT, collected at the border and received from Customs and the Mongolian Tax Authority (MTA). In view of recurrent issues of data reconciliation, the project is considering short-term assistance to generate standard reports that Customs and MTA can use for regular reporting and reconciliation.

*Private sector development strategy:* The project has completed a draft “white paper” — “Mongolian Businesses Speak”—focused on constraints to private sector investment and operations in selected sectors. The white paper is currently under internal review.

### **Trade Policy Support**

*Feasibility study for Zamiin Uud logistics facilities:* In the forthcoming technical report, EPRC proposes two specific clusters of interventions:

- Improvements at the clearance services facilities at Zamiin Uud (Customs and State Specialized Inspection Agency); and
- New Road-to-Rail Trans-shipment Facilities using a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.

In April the project presented the results of the pre-feasibility study during meetings with diverse stakeholders, and at an extended meeting of the National Committee on Trade and Transport Facilitation (NCTTF) with representatives of private sector and international community. EPRC has now engaged two international experts on this exercise: one for the physical planning of the border clearance site, and the other to conduct a pre-feasibility study of a PPP to help develop the transshipment facilities. Both experts started their assignments at the end of May.

*National Program to Establish Single Electronic Window (SEW):* EPRC initiated meetings with members of the SEW Working Group (WG) and is preparing draft documents for the establishment of a “shelf company” to implement the SEW. Current plans are to have the proposal ready for the SEW WG consideration before Naadam.

*Technical support for the “Transit Traffic Agreement between the Governments of the People’s Republic of China, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation”:* EPRC met with the Working Group on 29 May and agreement was reached to set up three separate subgroups

to work on: a) legal texts and negotiation; b) a system of guarantees and insurance; and, c) roads and vehicle specifications. The current schedule is for the subgroups to work during the first two weeks in June to develop proposals for WG consideration during a weekend retreat scheduled for Saturday, 14 June.

### **Financial Markets Support**

*Initial Public Offering Regulations:* The Financial Regulatory Commission (FRC) currently has a backlog of ten IPOs and has requested assistance to review the IPO regulations, approval policies and procedures, and recommend improvements as well as capacity building measures within the FRC to ensure effective implementation. EPRC is recruiting an international expert for this assignment that is expected to proceed in June.

*Credit Information Bureau (CIB):* Per request of the CIB working group, EPRC drafted the founding agreement for the CIB operating company. This document is circulating for comment among the fourteen banks and two non-bank financial institutions that will be the initial shareholders.

### **Competitiveness Support**

*New tourist circuits developed for the Japanese market:* On 22 May, an EPRC consultant with the Mongolia National Tourism Organization (MNTTO) conducted a half-day training session for managers of Mongolian tour operator companies interested in targeting the Japanese market.

*New tourist circuits developed for western aimags:* EPRC is negotiating with a consortium comprised of Xola Consulting, an adventure tourism consulting firm, and the Adventure Travel Trade Association to inventory the five western aimags; recommend upgrading of facilities and services; develop a packaging and promotion strategy to North American and European markets; and launch the promotion campaign. The assignment will start on or about 10 July.

*New Mongolia Travel Guide:* EPRC helped the MNTTO design the travel itinerary for Mr. Carl Robinson, the managing editor and author for the Odyssey “Mongolia Guide and Companion” book. The author is traveling through Eastern Mongolia, Bayanhongor Aimag, Western Mongolia, Khovsgol, and South Gobi. With EPRC assistance, the MNTTO has arranged logistical support from MNTTO members and sold ten pages of advertising in the forthcoming publication. This contribution to the production is expected to generate approximately \$50,000 in revenue for the MNTTO.

### **Energy Sector Support**

*Energy sector financial status:* EPRC and the Energy Regulatory Authority (ERA) continue to address tariff issues. The Ministry of Fuel and Energy (MoFE) has requested that there be no tariff increases in June or July, citing the upcoming election. The detailed Proposed Tariff Reform Plan/Program is now complete and has the agreement of the ERA. Counterparts received the document on 29 May. The project will also submit the document to the Energy Working Group (EWG) in early June. The two-part generation tariff methodology became effective on 1 May. It is anticipated that the tariff will

undergo design changes in the coming months to improve the price signals and encourage greater efficiency.

*Energy Working Group and GoM/external partners meetings:* The EWG held its second meeting of 2008 on 14 May. Meeting notes have been forwarded to EWG members for review and comment. The next EWG meeting is scheduled on or about 19 June. The next GoM/External Partners Technical Meeting is not expected until after Naadam (early July) at the earliest.

*MoFE re-organization and priorities:* Prior to a GoM National Security Council (NSC) review of the Sector Policy Document, an NSC staff expert reviewed the document and provided recommendations. The MoFE will respond to the NSC expert's opinions and recommendations, and incorporate EWG members' comments before the full NSC reviews the document. The MoFE plans to submit the document to the newly elected Parliament at the fall session of Parliament.

*Public Information/Public Education (PI/PE) campaign:* To date, six workshops have been held for the mass media at several energy sector entities. The next event, in June, will be the first in a series of TV slots regarding the energy sector.

*Performance Agreements:* Negotiations continued between the ERA and CHP #4 in May.

*Energy legislation:* Project comments on the draft Concession Law, as well as the draft Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) Law, were forwarded to the Ministry of Justice, the Chairman of the Economic Standing Committee of Parliament, the EWG and Mr. Bailikhuu of the State Property Committee (SPC), who is a member of the working group developing the Concession Law. EPRC strongly recommends harmonization of the two draft laws. The amendment to the Energy Law remains dormant until after the elections.

*Development of the CHP #5 tender process and documents:* The Cabinet discussed this issue several times, agreed that there is a need for CHP #5, and decided to appoint a Working Group to handle the procurement. The bidder response period has been increased to ninety days and the Cabinet postponed the issue of the tender from the original date of 15 May to 20 May. As of the end of May, however, the tender documents had not been released. The Ulaanbaatar city government is moving forward on preparation of the land-use permit.

*New Electricity Market Development Program:* EPRC, the ERA, and the World Bank agreed in May that the project will assume the lead role for technical assistance in this area.

### **Consensus Building, Public Education, and National Dialogue Support**

*Design of new Open Government television program series:* EPRC has completed the review process of the first program of the series. The program is the first of a two-part

series on issues of heating in Ulaanbaatar, and the final version is expected to be available in June.

*Mongolian Tax Authority (MTA) website statistics:* The current monthly average number of unique visitors to the website is 2,463, compared to the monthly average of 1,996 last year. The cumulative number of unique visitors since the site was redesigned and launched in June 2007 is now over 27,000.

*GoM public information websites using project-developed Joomla! Mongolia Content Management System (CMS):* Forty eight GoM websites, eight of them developed with project support, are now using the open-source full Mongolian CMS that the project made available through ICTA based on the Joomla! CMS. The “package” that the project developed comes with website templates that are easily customized, are in Mongolian and require no licensing or payment of commercial fees. Joomla! Mongolia was launched to address low levels of English proficiency among staff in charge of GoM websites and budgetary constraints that inhibit the use of licensed commercial CMS.

Around the world, 6,550 websites in twelve different languages were using Joomla! International CMS as of the end of May. EPRC developed this CMS as a derivative of the Joomla! CMS to provide full Unicode UTF-8 compatibility to handle Mongolian, and made the version available in the public domain under the General Public License (GPL).

### **Project management**

*USAID Regional Inspector General (RIG) management audit of USAID/EPRC:* A RIG audit team initiated a management audit of USAID/EPRC on 27 May. The field audit is scheduled to last three to four weeks.

## **Gobi Regional Economic Growth Initiative (GI)**

### ***Mercy Corps***

[www.mercycorps.org.mn](http://www.mercycorps.org.mn)

### **Sales**

The Gobi Initiative uses sales generated from new business activities outlined in formal business plans developed by clients as an indicator of success. The total sales for herder and non-herder businesses for May 2008 was \$79,070 and \$89,354, respectively, bringing total sales for CY08 as of the end of May to \$961,027 against an annual sales target of \$3.9 million. Total sales are up 10% over the same time last year (\$875,330 in CY2007), and average sales per business has risen by 7% to \$2,957.

Total sales generated by business clients under the Gobi Initiative Phase II from January 2004 to date is \$9.7 million against total USAID funding for the Gobi Initiative (less sub grant agreements) to date of \$5.5 million.

### **Loans**

In May, many commercial banks suspended new loan issues following a recommendation from the Central Bank. Although the loan issue process is slowly reviving, banks

continue to exercise greater caution, particularly with new customers who have no previous history with the bank. This has slowed Mercy Corps client business operations with many unable to obtain loans in time to meet their original business plans.

Through May, herder and non-herder clients took out loans from commercial banks with an aggregate value of \$10,249 for which Mercy Corps provided \$4,057 (40%) as additional cash collateral. The total number of loans accessed by Gobi Initiative clients in the first five months of the year now stands at 149, with the total value of disbursed loans reaching \$423,503 at an average loan size for the year of \$2,842.

Mercy Corps has provided a total of \$158,904 as additional cash collateral through the year, constituting 39% of all collateral requirements for client loans. This is significantly below the average of 84% collateral guarantees made early in Gobi Phase II in May 2004. Since the program began, 700 loans have been disbursed with a total value of \$1.86 million. Overall the repayment rate on all loans is 96%.

### **Tender for Gers**

In May, the Dundgovi Aimag Governor's office announced a tender among local producers to procure 100 gers to be delivered to poor families. Mercy Corps' office in Dundgovi Aimag assisted clients by offering advice and helping them to submit applications and develop project plans for the tender. The office also sent detailed information about our clients and their products to the Governor's Office. Two clients participated and won contracts through the tender process. These included the "Shuvuutain Gurvan Jirem" cooperative from Huld Soum, and "Agit" from Saintsagaan Soum. The Shuvuutain Gurvan Jirem cooperative has now received orders for 180 pieces of felt ceiling and 270 pieces of felt wall covering with a total contract value of \$16,580. Agit is to produce 40 sets of wooden ger parts worth \$9,060. They both plan to deliver their finished products by July 9.

### **Micro Finance Conference in Ulaanbaatar**

Mercy Corps Mongolia is a platinum sponsor of the Micro Finance Conference which was held in Ulaanbaatar on 29-31 May 2008. As a platinum sponsor for this conference, Mercy Corps promoted its activities to conference participants through a wide range of media opportunities.

Mercy Corps received permission to have client stands inside the Parliament Building, where the Micro Finance Conference was held, as well as at all four hotels where participants were lodged. These stands provided an excellent opportunity for showcasing the products made by Gobi Initiative and Rural Agribusiness Support Program clients. All stands were clearly marked with corresponding USAID and USDA logos. Mercy Corps invited 11 clients engaged in souvenir production to participate in this event.

In addition, Mercy Corps included felt coasters made by Mercy Corps clients as a small gift for conference participants. The "Hongoriin Sor" cooperative from Bayanhongor Aimag and "Bayan Duhum" from Uvurhangai Aimag produced 300 felt coasters worth \$205 for the conference.

## **Yak Wool**

A training of trainers (ToT) event on Yak Wool Combing and Grading was organized by Mercy Corps and the Mongol Yak Association in Bayanhongor and Uvurhangai aimags on May 6-10. This training was structured around the outcomes of the yak wool value chain analysis which identified the lack of yak wool combing (as opposed to shearing) as a major constraint to improved wool quality. The training covered yak wool combing and grading technology, wool quality, production technology for combed versus sheared wool, and the consequences of each method on eventual yarn quality.

Besides theoretical training, participants also engaged in practical yak combing exercises. Thirty-two (32) participants from the Bayanhongor Alliance and 26 participants from the Sarlag Erdene NGO and the Business New Idea Extension Center NGO in Uvurhangai Aimag attended the training. Wool processing companies, including Sanjaaz LLC and Erdenet Cashmere LLC, introduced their activities to participants. All participants received local trainer certificates on successful completion of the training. A total of 508 yak wool combs and 550 handouts on yak wool combing and grading were donated to the Bayanhongor Alliance and the Business New Idea Extension Center NGO for further distribution to herders.

## **Rural Business News magazine**

Rural Business News (RBN) Magazine edition #59, published in May, contained 12 seasonal stories and information for herders, farmers, businesses and local residents. The lead story emphasized the rapid increase of goat numbers in Mongolia, highlighting for herders the need to think of grassland rather than cashmere. This edition also hosted an interview with the current Minister of Food and Agriculture concerning agricultural product price fluctuations and food safety issues.

As a marketing tool to increase subscriptions to RBN Magazine, a total of 5,000 A4-sized fliers were printed and distributed in aimag centers. The flier gives information on subscriptions to RBN, pricing, and the value of information to herders and businesses.

## **Market Watch**

Media for Business (MFB) held meetings with representatives of the European Union (EU) Animal Health and Livestock Marketing (AHLM) project regarding the possibility of accessing funds for continuation of Market Watch. AHLM is specifically interested in the collection and dissemination of price information concerning animal related products in six aimag centers including Ulaanbaatar. MFB employed a market watcher in Tuv Aimag to collect market prices and dismissed a market watcher from Nalaikh. Starting May 26, the Market Watch System will function with 21 aimag-based staff and one staff member based in Ulaanbaatar.

## **Future events**

A yak wool fair is scheduled for June 14-15 in Bayanhongor Aimag and another for June 17-18 in Uvurhangai Aimag. Fifteen tons of yak wool from Bayanhongor and five tons of wool from Uvurhangai are expected to be sold at the market fairs.

A roundtable discussion will be held on June 6 with the Umnogovi Aimag Professional Inspection Agency. Discussions will focus on creating a better environment for businesses, and cooperation between local business and government organizations. It will also give the Agency a platform to present its activities to local businesses.

## **GER Initiative**

### ***CHF International***

[www.chfmongolia.org](http://www.chfmongolia.org)

In May, the GER Initiative helped to improve or expand 53 businesses, created 11 start-up businesses, and generated a total of 46 new jobs. Also this month, the GER Initiative matched 43 ger area residents to jobs.

### **Financial services**

GER facilitated 38 loans valued at over \$41,325 with local partner banks and 18 USDA funded Capital Augmentation Fund (CAF) loans valued at \$43,029 were disbursed through local banks. Commercial banks resumed loan disbursement this month, but with higher loan interest. XacBank, for example, increased the monthly project loan interest from 1.5 – 2.0% to 1.7 – 2.4%.

GER has reached the target level of a \$400,000 outstanding portfolio for the USDA funded Capital Augmentation Fund (CAF). Limited disbursements will be made in the future to maintain this level.

### **Training and Consultant services**

GER conducted 310 training sessions with 93 clients participating (many clients participated in more than one session), and 148 consultations were provided to 120 clients.

At the request of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission's (NLM) Wool Processing Marketing Project (WPMP), GER provided "Time Management," "Costing and Pricing" and "Consumptions and Savings" trainings for its felt producer-cooperative members from Ulaanbaatar and rural areas. A total of 18 business owners attended the training where they learned how to improve productivity and growth through time and attendance management at the workplace, how to calculate product cost accordingly, how to set the right price for their products, and how to control cash flow, save and spend wisely.

Another training was provided for the "Gender Equality Center" NGO (GEC), which works with victims of human trafficking, sexual harassment and domestic violence. GER also provided the "Right Start" package service for nine low-income GEC clients who live in the ger areas and are interested in running their own businesses. The package includes Start-Up, Business Planning, Market Research, Consumption and Savings, Bookkeeping and Borrower's Education trainings, as well as an Accounting booklet. After the trainings, clients will receive additional consultancies on writing their business plans. When their business plans are ready, GEC will fund their projects.



In Dornod, GER provided vocational training for bakery shop owners to improve product quality and develop new product designs. Clients learned from the two-day practical training how to make a number of new pastry products, including cakes, cookies and muffins; how to decorate cakes; and what ingredients can be used for certain types of products. A specialist from Ulaanbaatar conducted the training.

In Ulaanbaatar, an agriculture business trip was organized at the request of the “Uvsnii Undes” NGO for their clients, who were interested in running farm businesses. A total of eleven participants went on the trip and visited GER’s poultry, rabbit, vegetable, berry and tree growing farmer-clients. GER farmer – clients welcomed visitors, showing their farms and sharing their knowledge and experience, which encouraged visitors to start their own businesses.

### **Information Services**

GER provided information 788 times in May, to 334 clients, and one information meeting was held with 43 clients participating. Clients’ meetings about business group were held five times. Agricultural and construction related information continued to be in high demand in May.

In Ulaanbaatar, GER organized a meeting under the title “Optimal building solutions for the house and workspace.” The meeting provided information on construction material choice and price, calculating a budget, and heating, sanitation and sewage issues. Organizations attending the meeting included the Mongolian Construction Engineers’ Association (MCEA), the General Emergency Authority (GEA), GTZ Urban Development, and the Construction Sector and Vocational Education and Training Supporting Program. The construction firms “Atmor” LLC, “Tasumo” LLC, and “Ikh Uudam” LLC also participated, introducing their activities, products and services and giving detailed information to 43 clients.

Work continued on the Khashaa Valuation Survey (KVS) in May. So far, all database analysis has been completed and the survey report is in progress.

### **Employment Services**

GER matched 43 clients to jobs and 29 clients entered vocational training programs in May. A total of 89 employment trainings were held for 37 clients and a total of 46 jobs were generated. This month, 57 clients graduated from various vocational trainings ranging from cell phone repair to agriculture at the partner vocational training centers such as Solongo and Shine Garts.

In collaboration with the Bayan-Olgii Social Welfare and Employment Department, GER organized a trade fair called “Newly generated jobs – 2008” in Olgii in May to advertise vocational trainings and to introduce GER start-up-clients who generated jobs on their own. Six GER handicrafts clients took part in the trade fair. Olgii residents were especially interested in agriculture and cellular phone repair vocational trainings. Both trainings are provided through the Employment Support Fund voucher program.

### **Linkages and Trade Fairs**

GER facilitated linkages between businesses worth approximately \$49,122 in May. GER also linked clients to the Southgobi Sands LLC, which ordered 36 pieces of metal lockers and 200 pieces of metal suitcases for combined total sales of \$22,582.

New linkage relationships were established with Khuvsgul Travel LLC, Shined LLC (a Singer sewing machine distributor), Bold Soft LLC (network communications), and Naadam, a French NGO.

In Ulaanbaatar and Erdenet, GER held two agriculture trade fairs to support its agriculture business clients to increase sales and links with buyers. In total, 36 business clients participated in the event with seeds and seedlings of vegetables, berry bushes, trees, flowers, and agricultural tools. Clients made sales worth \$2,926 and received additional orders worth \$742.

### **Business Groups Development**

GER worked with 97 active business groups in May. Three new groups were formed, and no groups disbanded. Groups were formed in Ulaanbaatar, Dornod and Zuunmod; two were tailors, and the other a ger rope spinning business. Dornod business group members received the “New Business Group” package service.

GER and IMPPACTS delivered a number of trainings on behalf of the “Mongolian – German Bridge” NGO in May. The NGO works on supporting cooperatives, and GER and IMPPACTS provided the “Legal Environment of Cooperatives” and “Developing Cooperative Rules” trainings for 16 clients. Out of these clients, two cooperatives will be formed. One cooperative’s members have already held their first meeting, developed and approved their cooperative by-laws and filed their registration documentation.

## **PROGRAM AREA: MORE EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE**

### **The Judicial Reform Project (JRP)**

*National Center for State Courts (NCSC)*

[www.ncsc.com](http://www.ncsc.com)

In May, USAID fully funded JRP and extended the completion date of the Project from June 30, 2008 to December 31, 2008. USAID also approved Ms. Kala M. Finn, Esq., as the Interim Chief of Party.

### **Courts**

JRP assisted the General Council of Courts (GCC) in organizing a conference for forty (40) court administrators that took place May 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. The conference provided a forum for court administrators to discuss current issues and developments with regard to

the recently implemented case management standards, and to discuss new management principles and practices.

During the conference, court administrators also discussed the draft 2009-2015 Strategic Plan, which is being developed with JRP assistance. The GCC has requested that JRP review and comment on the draft Strategic Plan before and after it is circulated to members of the judiciary for comment.

The Minister of Justice and the Chief Justice have requested that JRP assist the GCC with developing and implementing substantive trainings for court administrators. These trainings should focus on the core competencies of court administration and also have a management and leadership component.

JRP continues to oversee updates to the judicial software. The GCC and JRP IT teams are working together to integrate the necessary changes that correspond to the newly adopted regulation on statistics and reporting. JRP is also working on upgrading the Judge2005 software and is coding new modules based on the recommendations of Mr. Jim McMillan, an IT expert from NCSC, who worked with JRP in April. The JRP IT team is also working on changing the case tracking software to case management software, per the recommendations of Mr. McMillan.

#### **General Prosecutor's Office (GPO)**

In order to avoid duplication, the GPO updated its internal rules and procedures related to day-to-day supervisory work. In support of this activity and per the request of the GPO, JRP funded the publication of two books, "Compilation of Internal Guidelines" and "Compilation of All Resolutions." The books were published by the National Legal Center (NLC).

JRP assisted with establishing a pilot Public Access Terminal (PAT) at the GPO in May. The JRP IT team provided hardware to the GPO (computer, UPS, printer, copier, and scanner) for the pilot PAT. The JRP IT team also contracted with "NewTeleCom" for installing digital audio/video recording systems in five (5) interview rooms.

#### **Police**

The JRP IT team completed local computer network installations (LANs) for the Bayangol and Baganuur district police divisions. The team also supported the creation of a wide area network for these police stations. The Bayangol and Baganuur district police stations are now connected to the virtual private network (VPN) of city police officers and the General Police Department through a fiber optic cable network provided by the MobiCom Company.

JRP ordered crime scene evidence collection forensic kits with the purpose of improving the forensic investigative functions of the police. The first shipment of forensic kit items was received in December and a second shipment was received in May. The second shipment was delayed due to the lengthy process of obtaining export/import licenses for hazardous items. There are still a few items that have not been received, and JRP is

working with TriTech on the shipment. Once the kits are complete, JRP will deliver them to the pilot police stations and the Special Investigations Unit (SIU).

### **Legal Clinic**

JRP delivered posters to the legal clinic in May, and met with Professor Davaasuren Naranchimeg. During this meeting, Professor Naranchimeg briefed JRP staff on Otgontenger University's continued work with other law schools regarding their interest in starting legal clinics. Otgontenger University asked for the assistance of JRP to publish the training manual that it has developed with regard to training law faculty from other schools on the teaching techniques and methodologies needed for starting and sustaining a successful legal clinic.

### **Training**

JRP is working with the NLC on the final report for the monitoring program that was conducted in April with regard to judicial opinion writing. JRP is also working with the NLC to establish a registration system for Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) according to the requirements of the new amendments to the Law on Lawyers' Qualification Exam which took effect in the fall of 2007. Several meetings have taken place between the staff of NLC and JRP, which included the JRP IT team to provide guidance and assistance regarding the Distance Learning system and the registration system for MCLE training. These discussions have focused on technical requirements, software design, description of the application software, description of the database, and problems related to the registry system and curriculum for the Distance Learning program.

### **Public Education**

In May, in cooperation with the GCC, JRP started the selection of courts (based on their interest) where Public Affairs Officers' work will be expanded to include further development of information for self-representing litigants and community outreach.

Last March, JRP received the scripts of the new radio drama series from Mongol Radio for review. The new radio drama consists of twenty-six series, and includes fifty (50) different episodes. The title of the new drama program series is "Comprehension." In May, the series was reviewed for accuracy by JRP staff and by Judge B. Battseren of the Capitol City Court, who provided seven pages of recommendations and suggestions. The drama series is scheduled to begin in June or July. The new series uses recurring characters to dramatize crimes in order to explain provisions of the criminal code to the public. At the end of each radio drama series, an experienced lawyer explains to the public the court's decision on the case. The program will be broadcast nationwide on three channels of Mongol Radio, and it will follow a similar format as the previous radio drama series, "Do Not Violate."

In May, the second poster for the GPO's Public Access Terminal was developed. Once JRP receives approval from the GPO, the poster will be delivered to the printing company. In addition to the development of this poster, JRP assisted the GCC in the printing of a poster on "The Administrative Caseflow Management Standards" and the

GPO with the printing of a poster on the “Prosecutor’s Ethical Council.” One thousand copies of each of these posters were printed and 800 copies of each poster were delivered to the GCC and the GPO. JRP will be distributing the other 200 copies of each poster through the end of the year. During the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs’ recent “Open Door Day” activity, 150 posters were distributed to public and private organizations.

In February, JRP duplicated all twelve (12) episodes of the “Blue Book” public education series on CD-COM. In April, JRP continued to distribute 300 sets to law schools, TV studios and NGOs. The TV series provided educational programming to citizens on criminal laws and trial procedures by dramatizing real-life trials. Every episode consists of three-parts, including a legal analysis by a lawyer and expert commentary to ensure that the laws and procedures are understood by the viewers. JRP also distributed copies of the “Blue Book” series at the Court Administration Conference that was held May 29–30.

#### **Future Activities for June**

In June, JRP will continue to work with the courts and the GPO on upgrading their software. JRP will also continue to: assist the GCC in developing the Strategic Plan for the Judiciary; monitor judicial opinion writing; facilitate the process of upgrading the police software; assist the Special Investigations Unit (SIU); work with the NLC to produce a training video on trial skills; and distribute public education materials.

### **The Mongolian Electoral and Parliamentary Support Project (MEPS)** ***International Republican Institute (IRI)***

[www.iri.org](http://www.iri.org)

#### **June 2008 Parliamentary Election Update**

On May 5, the Mongolian Social Democratic Party (MSDP) joined the Citizen’s Coalition. This coalition now consists of three political parties: the Mongolian Green Party, the Civil Movement Party and the MSDP.

On May 10, the National Committee of the Citizen’s Will Party (CWP) met and decided that the CWP shall run as an independent party without further unifying or merging with any other party and/or coalition. The Citizen’s Will Party already merged with the Mongolian Solidarity Party in April. Despite this earlier merger, the CWP opted to retain its name and management structure.

On May 19, the MPRP approved their party’s platform and formally submitted it to the GEC. The election platform of the MPRP consists of the following objectives:

- Enhancing quality of life,
- Perfecting health policy,
- Improving the intellectual capacity of Mongolians,
- Perfecting environmental policy,
- Developing a good policy for herders,

- Rehabilitating agricultural industry,
- Perfecting governance,
- Perfecting civil society and civic participation, and
- Improving national security and foreign policy.

### **General Election Commission (GEC) Update**

On May 14, Mr. Battulga, Chairman of the GEC, made a press statement in the Government House in conjunction with a formal announcement of the 2008 Parliamentary elections. The parliamentary election will take place (as expected) on June 29. The chairman of the GEC warned candidates and parties to refrain from any election campaign activities until June 2, the date when the nominees will receive candidate IDs and election campaigning will launch formally.

On May 21, the Chairman of the GEC and Mr. Bayarsaikhan, Secretary of the GEC, called a press conference in which they stated that the GEC was going to organize 26 electoral district committee, 340 sub-district committees, and 1800 polling stations. According to the Election Law, the Chief and Secretary of polling stations must be from different parties.

On May 22, the General Election Commission (GEC) granted certificates of participation for the parliamentary elections to all 12 of the parties (and one coalition) that applied for participation in the election. The Chairman of the GEC asked the parties to compete while observing the Constitution and the laws of Mongolia. Party leaders and secretaries were present to receive their certificates.

On May 28, the Citizen's Coalition (Green Party, Civil Movement Party and Social Democratic Party) protested outside of the General Election Commission (GEC). They demanded that the GEC allow them to have representatives included in the election district committees. They also stated that if the GEC will not do anything regarding their demand, the GEC must be ousted before the election. Mr. Batzandan, chairman of Civil Movement Party, was interviewed and stated that his party was concerned particularly with the election committees of the Songinokhairkhan, Bayanzurkh, and Sukhbaatar districts of Ulaanbaatar, and the Tuv and Darkhan-Uul aimags (where reportedly no representatives from the Citizen's Coalition have been appointed).

On May 29, two new members were appointed to the GEC to fill seats that became vacant in May. Ms. Solongo, Head of Legal Department of the Government Secretariat was nominated by the President. Mr. Altanjargal, Legal Adviser to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor, was nominated by the SGH. The changes in membership of the GEC do not affect the partisan make up of the body. There are nine members of the GEC, and the new commission contains exactly the same partisan breakdown as the old commission: 7 members are affiliated with the MPRP and 2 members are affiliated with the DP.

### **SGH Update**

On May 20, Mr. Luvsanjav resigned from the post of General Secretary of SGH Secretariat Office during an SGH floor session. The SGH accepted his resignation and approved the appointment of Mr. Sandag-Ochir, former General of the National Police, to replace him. Mr. Sandag-Ochir has been a member of the GEC since 2006. Before he became General Secretary of the Secretariat Office, Mr. Sandag-Ochir served as an adviser to SGH Speaker Mr. Lundeejantsan. Mr. Sandag-Ochir was appointed as General of the National Police when the current President Mr. Enkhbayar was serving as PM from 2000-2004, but he was ousted from this post when Mr. Elbegdorj became PM in 2004.

On May 22, the SGH passed the “Law on Labor Safety and Hygiene.” This law was the subject of a public forum (aka town hall meeting) conducted by IRI on March 9, 2007 for the constituency of MP Adiya in Orkhon Aimag.

### **Second Nationwide Poll in Advance of the Parliamentary Election**

From April 16 to May 8, IRI cooperated with the Academy of Sociology of the National University of Mongolia to field a public opinion poll of 1000 likely voters for the upcoming parliamentary elections. American pollster Sarah Simmons is conducting the analysis and compiling the results. The results of the poll will be presented to the political parties during the first week of June. The primary purpose of the poll is to function as a tool for the political parties in order to fine tune their campaign messages.

### **SGH Adoption and Implementation of Committee Rules**

On May 23, IRI was informed by the SGH Standing Committee on the Budget that the committee has finally passed its rules of procedure. At present, five out of seven standing committees have adopted such rules. Rules of procedure provide for the standardization of committee operations and lay the groundwork for conducting open hearings.

### **Poll Watcher Training**

In May, IRI Mongolia conducted poll watcher training seminars for the DP in the Tuv, Gobi-Sombor, Orhon, Khuvsgul, Arkhangai, Khentii, Dornogobi, Sukhbaatar, Dornod, and Uvs aimags. IRI also conducted such trainings for the DP in the Bayangol, Songinokhairkhan, Bayanzurkh, Khan-Uul, Baganuur, Bagakhangia, Nalaikh, Sukhbaatar, and Chingeltei districts of Ulaanbaatar.

On May 19, IRI Mongolia conducted a poll watcher training for the MPRP in Ulaanbaatar. In advance of this training, the MPRP informed IRI of their decision to have only one *single* seminar, and to invite two participants from each aimag and UB district.

Participants in all poll watcher trainings were instructed in voting procedure, Election Law, the rights and responsibilities of election observers, methods to recognize and prevent election fraud, and the process for documenting alleged instances of election fraud.

## **Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership (APDP) Observation of the June 29 Mongolian Parliamentary Election**

In May, IRI made preparations to facilitate an election observation team consisting of delegates from member countries of the Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership. On May 28, Mr. John Anelli, Election Observation Coordinator for the APDP observation mission (facilitated by IRI), arrived in Ulaanbaatar.

## **The Mongolia Anti-Corruption Support Project (MACS)**

### ***The Asia Foundation (TAF)***

[www.asiafound.org](http://www.asiafound.org)

### **IAAC Institution-building and Advocacy**

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, asset and income disclosures were due for all civil servants. Compliance among senior government officials was high, but some mid-ranking officials failed to file. The IAAC is taking legal action against the officers and others who made intentional false disclosures.

Between April 25<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>, TAF mobilized Mr. Tony Kwok, ex-Deputy Commissioner of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption, for IAAC capacity building and training. On May 1<sup>st</sup>, he conducted a one-day anti-corruption training and provided assistance to senior management of the State Specialized Inspection Agency (SSIA) in strengthening their draft anti-corruption action plan before submission to the IAAC. Mr. Shiirevdamba, Head of the SSIA, stated that his Agency is giving great importance to the PM's initiative to combat and prevent corruption in public offices by developing anti-corruption action plans for each Ministry and line Agency. Mr. Shiirevdamba gathered 40 senior-most officials from the National and the Municipal offices to attend anti-corruption training and engage them in developing the action plan.

Mr. Kwok also provided similar training and assistance to the Municipality of Ulaanbaatar. Participants included mid and senior management of all major municipality offices, including Land, Tax, Customs, Education, and Traffic Police.

### **Public Awareness and Education**

Since the launch of the anti-corruption hotline campaign on 19 Nov. 2007, the Corruption Reporting Center has received 1,685 calls of which 108 were corruption reports. The IAAC is currently investigating 29 corruption reports. In the past month the Reporting center received 228 calls, down from 269 calls in April (see table on next page).

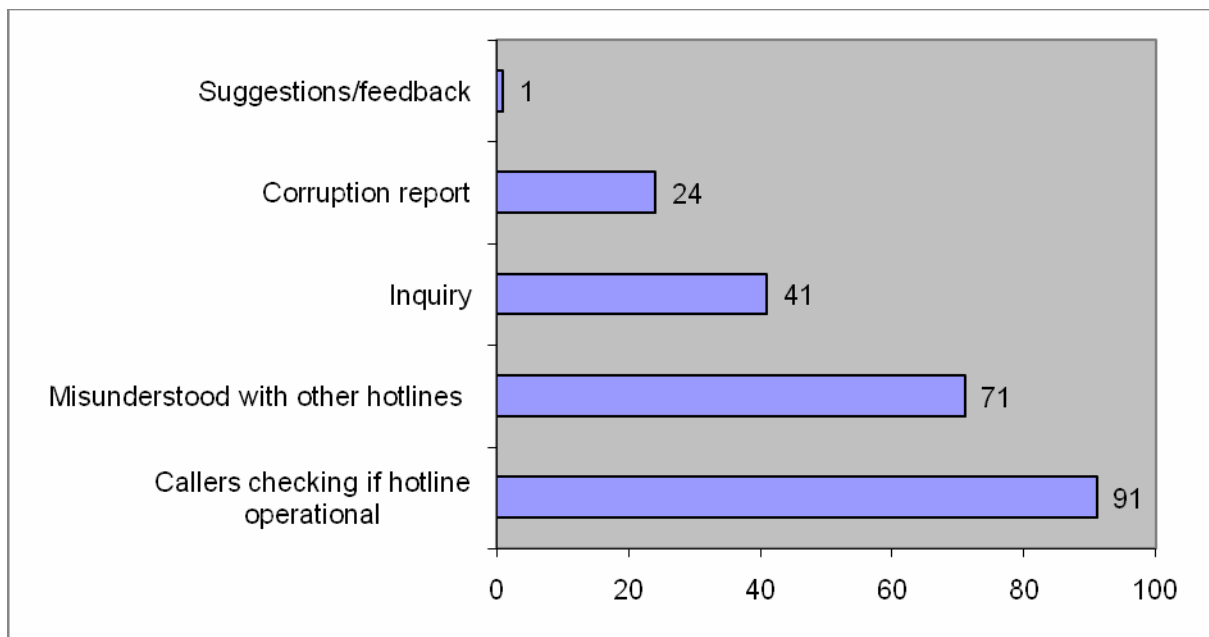
The Asia Foundation in partnership with the Independent Authority Against Corruption will launch the third phase of the multi-media campaign on all major television stations, top daily newspapers and radio that will promote a clean, corruption-free and fair election. The campaign will run from May 23 to May 30 and again June 15 to June 29. The campaign will deliver the message: "Don't sell your vote; your government will be corrupted." Campaign print materials include a brochure, billboards, street advertisements and posters that deliver campaign messages, and explain the cost of election-related corruption. All campaign activities will run concurrently.



Two TV Public Service Announcements (PSAs) will be produced and broadcast multiple times each day for the better part of a month on four television stations. Television stations are offering a discount on airtime, as with the previous phases, indicating a willingness and interest to partner with the IAAC in fighting corruption. The two PSAs will also be aired at the “Tengis” movie theater five times a day. Summarized versions of the PSAs will be broadcast on the electronic screens near Sukhbaatar square, and in front of the State Department Store.

Two radio ads feature famous celebrities who deliver campaign messages, and encourage citizens to join a clean and fair election. Ads will be run on four radio stations for 30 days. Print ads will be published in the top four newspapers once a week. One billboard (5x36m) and 30 light box ads will reinforce TV and radio by delivering consistent messaging.

### **Corruption Reporting Center April 28 – May 25**



**Total calls 228**

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the fourth phase of the campaign will be launched to support and encourage citizens to report corruption to the IAAC’s Corruption Reporting Center and hotline. The campaign is designed to call citizens to action, and deliver the messages: “Zero Tolerance” and the “Cost of corruption accrues to you and your family – report corruption.” Campaign print materials include a “How to Report Corruption” brochure, billboards, posters, and other accessories that deliver campaign messages through strategic outreach activities to universities, high schools, businesses and other forums. According to the Asia Foundation’s prior semi-annual benchmarking surveys, people

tend to face increased corruption in the fall, after the long summer break, and at the beginning of the school year.

A new TV ad will be produced and aired during Phase IV. Increased emphasis will be placed on the IAAC senior officials to engage the media more actively. The IAAC officials have been extremely reluctant to engage media for fear of misrepresentation, despite recognition that citizen engagement and communication are imperative.

### **Donor Coordination**

TAF continues to actively work with World Bank (WB) and the Asia Development Bank (ADB) to enlist and coordinate donor support for the IAAC. TAF started negotiations with the WB and secured matching funds of approximately \$42,000, which will support the Phase III and IV \$84,000 public awareness and education campaign.

## **CENTRALLY (USAID/W) OR REGIONALLY (USAID/RDMA) FUNDED PROJECTS**

### **Eastern Steppe Living Landscape Project - Sustaining Wildlife and Traditional Livelihoods in the Arid Grasslands of Mongolia** *Wildlife Conservation Society*

[www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org)

#### **Living Landscapes Program (LLP)**

*Eastern Steppe Conservation Planning:* Conservation planning efforts continued in May with a focus on communicating the outputs of the January and February aimag-level conservation planning activities to conservation partners on the Eastern Steppe, including WWF-Mongolia and The Nature Conservancy.

*Mongolian Gazelle:* In May the Russian conservation and research community reported a large congregation of Mongolian gazelle along the Russian-Mongolian border near the Ereentsav-Solovievsk border crossing in northern Dornod aimag. Many of the gazelle were reported to be in poor condition, and a number of individuals died after getting caught up in the barbed wire fences which run along the border. WCS data on the movement and population dynamics of the Mongolian gazelle indicate that this is not the first time a large number of gazelle have congregated in this area of the country. Similar reports were made in 2002. The Russian and Mongolian authorities are reportedly removing some of the fencing along the border. This situation highlights the need to maintain the connectivity of the steppe habitat to ensure the conservation of migratory species like the Mongolian gazelle.

*Eastern Steppe Community-based Conservation Development:* WCS staff continued to work on preparing the proceedings from the April workshop *Community Based Wildlife Conservation in Mongolia*. Progress have been made on the development of a “Community-Based Conservation Blog” to facilitate continued information sharing

among participants from this workshop and to provide a forum for future discussion on community-based wildlife and natural resource management in Mongolia.

*Training & Capacity Building:* WCS staff member Ms. S. Bolortsetseg was accepted into the WCS Conservation Education Fellowship program. She departed for the U.S. on May 30<sup>th</sup> to attend three weeks of training at the WCS Conservation Education Center in New York, where she will develop a project focused on the delivery of training to members of the community-managed areas on the Eastern Steppe. Her project will focus on the development of training materials for habitat mapping and wildlife monitoring in community-managed areas.

*Donor Coordination:* WCS staff scheduled a series of meetings in May to coordinate current and future activities with projects and organizations involved in wildlife conservation and natural resource management in Mongolia. These included meeting with Mercy Corps' Gobi Forage project staff to discuss wildlife data in the pasture prediction modeling for the Eastern Steppe region. WCS staff members also attended the WWF Mongolia program-organized meeting on the Convention of Biodiversity, Program of Work for Protected Areas.

### **WCS Field Veterinary Program**

*Avian Influenza:* The Avian Influenza Project team began the 2008 season by hosting a workshop on bird marking at the National University of Mongolia (NUM) on May 9. The meeting entitled the "First Mongolian Bird Marking Workshop: The Science and Conservation of Bird Marking," was very well received, with approximately 60 attendees including ecology students, NUM faculty and professionals from the veterinary and health sectors. Dr. Philip Round, of the Wetland Trust and Mahidol University (Thailand), joined WCS Field Veterinarian Dr. Martin Gilbert for presentations and a discussion on bird capture and marking techniques, applications, and data management. Based on the level of enthusiasm evident during the discussion sessions, there is clearly a great deal of interest in developing a national bird marking program.

Following the workshop, the Avian Influenza Project team conducted a 10 day survey of Bulgan and Hovsgol aimags to coincide with the retreat of ice and the spring wild bird migration. The regular count and mortality survey at Erhel Nuur found no signs of highly pathogenic avian influenza since the last survey in late October 2007. Bird captures began with nocturnal "mist" netting at the former outbreak sites, Erhel Nuur and Hunt Nuur, and sample collection will continue at these and other sites in Hovsgol, Bulgan and Arkhangai through September.

### **Upcoming Events**

WCS Community-Based Wildlife Conservation staff members will be conducting mini-workshops with each of the 14 Eastern Mongolian Community Conservation Association managed areas on the Eastern Steppe July 15<sup>th</sup> through August 15<sup>th</sup>. The team will also participate in a Nature Conservancy conservation planning workshop for Tosoon Hustai Nature Reserve scheduled for June 21-23, at the Shazan Nuur Ger Camp in Dornod Aimag.

## **The Training, Advocacy and Networking Project (TAN)**

### ***Mercy Corps***

[www.mercycorps.org.mn](http://www.mercycorps.org.mn)

#### **Computer and English Language Center in Sant Soum**

In Sant Soum, three hours from the aimag center in eastern Uvurkhangai, the top priority cited by the youth focus groups during the TAN community assessment conducted late last year was the lack of access to computer and English language training. To address this, the local CSO *Motherland Development Center* developed a proposal to make use of government-provided rooms for a "Computer and English Language Training Center." The total cost of the project is 17,241 USD, but most of that is from the local government, with only 7,692 USD coming from the TAN project.

During this past month, renovations of the facilities were completed and the center was supplied with computers—half from the project team and half from the local government—along with other assorted pieces of furniture and equipment. The project team also managed to acquire several English language books, many with accompanying audio CDs, as a donation from the Asia Foundation.

#### **Well Rehabilitation in Erdenedalai Soum, Dundgobi Aimag**

In Dundgobi's Erdenedalai Soum, the *Bayantsagaan Herders' Association*, a TAN network CSO from the aimag center, is leading an 8,115 USD project to increase the capacity of a local well, a priority issue identified by residents in last year's TAN community assessment. This month saw the purchase of most of the required materials for the project. Furthermore, the Bayantsagaan Herders' Association is carrying out trainings in proper hygiene, a part of the project that has gained particular relevance in light of the current outbreak of the enterovirus.

#### **Citizens' Participation in Erdenedalai Soum**

The local branch of the *Academy for Political Education*, a Dundgobi network CSO, is implementing the project "Improving Citizens' Participation" in Erdenedalai soum. The main goal of the project is to enhance the civic education of local citizens and increase their participation in local decision-making processes. In early May the project team collected baseline data on the current level of citizens' participation and civic education. This was followed by the first round of civic education training for 35 community residents, conducted by the project team and trainers from the Ulaanbaatar headquarters of the Academy for Political Education. Additional trainings are scheduled.

#### **Dundgobi Social Entrepreneur Damba Leads the Construction of Greenhouses**

With the help of students and workers of secondary schools number four and five in Mandalgobi, TAN social entrepreneur Damba finished the construction of two greenhouses in early May. As part of a previous TAN subgrant, Damba oversaw the construction of greenhouses at school number one and outside of the Department of Social Welfare and Labor. As with the other greenhouses, Damba will use these newly constructed greenhouses for training students and the public on vegetable cultivation,

greenhouse construction, and the importance of vegetables as part of a healthy diet. Vegetables grown in the greenhouses will be used in the schools' cafeterias.

### **Khentii CSO Network Organizes Trainings for GoM Officials on Disability Issues**

The TAN CSO network of Khentii, led by member organization the *Association of Parents with Disabled Children*, carried out two trainings for 40 soum social workers and officers of social policy depts. covering legal issues regarding disabled children, including clarification of the benefits available to families with disabled children. The Khentii CSO network raised over 300,000 MNT from Khas Bank and World Vision in order to organize the training.

### **Khentii Anti-Alcoholism Project**

One of the main issues brought up by community members in Batnorov Soum of Khentii Aimag was alcohol abuse, especially among young people. To address this, the Undurkhan branch of the *Scouts Association*, a Khentii network CSO, together with their Batnorov Soum branch, is carrying out a project to educate the public on the dangers of alcohol abuse. In May the project team carried out training in the local schools. These trainings will continue through the end of the school year, and continue in the fall. Training of trainers (ToT) seminars were also conducted for adults and focused on stress management, family violence and health issues, and were carried out by project staff and individuals from the aimag Dept. of Health and the Ministry of Health in Ulaanbaatar.

### **"Citizens' Report Card" Administered in Remote Souns of Bulgan**

The CSO *Bulgan Leadership* began administering the "citizens' report card," a tool developed by the UNDP and used in many countries as a means of grading basic government services. The target soums, Teshig and Bugat, are well outside of the aimag center, in particular Teshig Soum, which is 240 km. from the aimag center on the Russian border. The survey will concentrate on health and education services in these soums. The results of the surveys are being analyzed, and will be presented to local govt. officials with the objective of producing tangible improvements to basic government services.

### **TAN Training Overview**

This month saw the continuation of capacity building trainings for TAN CSOs in all five TAN aimags. Capacity building trainings carried out in May included fund raising, conducting effective meetings, communications, time management, financial management, and civic participation. TAN CSOs from Arkhangai participated in an Open Society-sponsored training covering open government and transparency.

### **Innovating, Measuring and Promoting Poverty Alleviation by Cooperatives in Transition Societies (IMPPACTS)**

**CHF International**

[www.chfmongolia.org](http://www.chfmongolia.org)

### **Cooperative Unions Workshop**

In collaboration with the Norwegian Lutheran Mission's (NLM) Wool Processing Marketing Project and the Nationwide Cooperative Development Project (NCDP)

CHF/IMPACTS organized a two-day Cooperative Development Workshop for cooperators, cooperative unions and cooperative support organizations. A total of 65 participants took part, including 24 grassroots cooperators, seven union representatives, five secondary cooperatives, seven cooperative support organizations, and four government representatives. At the end of workshop a future collaboration plan for all participating partners was developed. Another achievement of the workshop was that NCDP promised to organize quarterly meetings among Cooperative Support Organizations. NCDP is producing the TV documentary film on Mongolian Cooperative development and included the workshop activities in the documentary film.

### **Partnership: Mongolian – Germany Bridge NGO**

Since April, GER and IMPACTS have been delivering a number of trainings on working as a group, forming a cooperative for the low-income and single mother clients who were willing to run sewing businesses by the request of the “Mongolian – German Bridge” NGO, which works on supporting cooperatives. This month GER and IMPACTS also provided “Legal Environment of Cooperatives” and “Developing Cooperative Rules” trainings for 16 clients, as described under the GER Initiative report above.

### **Radio program on cooperation**

IMPACTS has been working with the Mongolian National Radio program “Voice of Cooperative” to develop two radio programs on cooperation, awareness of cooperative development, and the collaboration work of cooperatives and cooperative support organizations. The programs will be ready for broadcast in June.

### **Cooperative Law Working Group**

The working group did not meet in May.

### **Organizational Assessment II**

IMPACTS continues work on the second business group organizational assessment. The final report is scheduled to be completed in July.

### **Avian Influenza (HPAI)**

#### ***UN Food and Agriculture Organization***

#### **The Animal Health Component of GoM’s National Pandemic Preparedness Plan.**

The International Technical Adviser (ITA) attended meetings with the World Bank (WB) and the GoM during an interim mission by a WB team from 22-27 May. The mission aimed at finalizing arrangements for the WB funded Avian Influenza Control and Human Influenza Preparedness and Response Project in Mongolia. The World Bank project has a budget of \$4.66 million, of which \$1.1 million is for an Animal Health Component, with an expected completion date of November 2010. The ITA assisted staff of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) in modifying the current cost tables, developing the first year’s work plan, and defining the project organizational structure and management arrangements. The ITA involvement ensures that the WB it is

coordinated with, and builds on the current activities and experiences of the Project gained over the last 18 months.

**Disease control, surveillance, response and farmer awareness improvement**

Five regional wild bird surveillance launch workshops were completed in mid-May. Surveillance in 2008 will cover over 60 lakes in 12 aimags. Training teams involved staff from MoFA Ministry of Nature and Environment, and Institute of Biology

Several aimags (Bayan-Olgii, Khovd, Uvs, Zavhan, Govi-Altai) are currently implementing the first surveillance trips. Surveillance teams integrate herder awareness activities into the surveillance program. Systems for data management in wild bird surveillance program were finalized, including establishment of standardized codes for observation areas and points.

A government poultry vaccination program is being implemented and the HPAI Project is starting a broad vaccination evaluation program in cooperation with the Veterinary Department of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The project also provided training to poultry farmers and private veterinarians on surveillance, response and vaccination at a meeting.

Work continues on finalizing disease outbreak response guidelines. Short-term Veterinary Laboratory Expert on HPAI provided a 14 day input from 8-21 May. The expert assessed management and diagnostic capacity at central and aimag levels. The final report is pending.

The HPAI project is cooperating with the USAID/W funded STOP AI project which will train staff from four GoM agencies including the Ministries of Agriculture and Health, NEMA, and the Inspection Agency from 2-6 June on surveillance and response with emphasis on poultry, including use of USAID supplied commodities (PPEs, decontamination equipment, and laboratory supplies). The STOP AI project is a USAID-funded global project aimed at providing technical assistance to countries on AI control.